10. Ending tuberculosis

Mr Chairman,

Slovakia would like to thank Secretariat for Reports and the opportunity to present at this governance meeting.

Tuberculosis (TB) is one of the main causes of death from communicable diseases and remains an important global problem. Every year, nearly 10, 4 million new cases are diagnosed and more than 1.5 million patients die of tuberculosis. In recent years, we have seen the rise in this disease also in some countries where we have previously seen a decline. This is because old risk groups of patients have mixed with new risk groups such as people infected with TB, HIV and Hepatitis-infected individuals, migrants and refugees.

We would like to echo those countries that see importance to focus on risk groups of patients, because many TB patients suffer from serious complicated or fatal clinical presentations, also in countries with a good access to innovative diagnostics and treatment. Slovak Republic ranks among European countries with one of the lowest incidence of TB; nevertheless we should not underestimate this disease, neither its co-infections with HIV or viral Hepatitis. We still monitor epidemiological situation at the national and international level and closely collaborate with international experts to support enhanced surveillance aimed preferably at risk and marginal groups.

Recognizing that the target of ending the tuberculosis epidemic by 2030 as set under the Sustainable Development Goals and as well as End TB Strategy, will not be possible without intensified research and innovation.

We are pleased that Slovakia can contribute to this mission and endeavour in the Regional WHO Collaborating Centre for TB with main focus on TB elimination in vulnerable groups, including TB educational program for training of health mediators from vulnerable groups. It is a cooperation effort of the Ministry of Health, WHO Collaboration Centre in cooperation with other national stakeholders and WHO Country Office in Slovakia. The activity successfully prepares field workers from marginalized groups from a disadvantaged environment. These fieldworkers provide cooperative contacting for basic medical examinations as well as follow-up on the continued treatment of patients with tuberculosis under outpatient conditions.
With regard to the point 16 of the Report on Draft global strategy for tuberculosis research and innovation, we would like to point out that further research and innovation for development new tools and strategies is needed to mitigate the human, social and economic consequences of the epidemic, while considering national contexts and circumstances.

Mr Chairman,

We would like to confirm Slovakia cosponsorship of the resolution on Draft Global Strategy for research and innovation.

Thank you for the attention.